

Nonetheless, some Hearers are asserted to realize emptiness (even though it is debatable whether they realize emptiness directly). These Hearers are explained as having first entered the Mahayana path of accumulation (before they entered the Hinayana path) on which they attained the conceptual realization of emptiness. Thereafter, due to the arising of adverse circumstances their Bodhicitta and thus their Mahayana path degenerated, and they entered the Hearer Hinayana path.

Since their realization of emptiness did not degenerate they continue to meditate on emptiness (and possibly, when they reach the path of seeing, are able to attain direct realization of emptiness). However, despite their realization of emptiness, these Hearers nevertheless rely on the direct realization of the lack of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self in order to eliminate afflictive obstructions.

Please note that afflictive obstructions are the obstructions that obstruct Hinayana practitioners from becoming Arhats and thus from overcoming Samsara.

### **Prasangika Madhyamika Tenet**

The proponents of the Prasangika Madhyamika tenet, on the other hand, assert that in order to eliminate afflictive obstructions and to attain self-liberation it is not sufficient to have merely a direct realization of the lack of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self. Therefore all Arya Hearers (like Bodhisattvas) must a direct realization of the emptiness of true existence of all phenomena.

Returning to the **Decisive Analysis**:

- Since some scriptures describe physical sublime eyes to be eye sense powers, someone asserts: "Whatever is a physical sublime eye is necessarily an eye sense power."

This is not correct because according to most of the Buddhist tenets an eye sense power does not perceive visual form. Only the proponents of the Vaibashika (Great Exposition) Tenet assert that an eye sense power perceives visual form. However, this is refuted by the proponents of the Sautrantrika in Vasubhandu's *Abhidharmakosha* (*Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*) when it says:

*Eye [sense powers] perceive visual forms, those that rely [on consciousness];  
Not the consciousness that relies on them.  
Why is that? Because forms that are blocked  
Are not seen – so it is claimed.*

The first two and a half lines are a description of the Vaibashika's assertion that eye sense powers perceive form. However, the phrase "so it is claimed" of the fourth line expresses disapproval by the proponents of the Sautrantrika Tenet. The proponents of the higher tenets (Cittamatra, Svatantrika Madhyamika, and Prasangika Madhyamika) also disagree with the assertion that eye sense powers perceive form.

Furthermore, it is not correct to assert that a physical sublime eye is an eye sense power because if it were it would absurdly follow that a physical sublime eye is not an object-possessor. If it were an eye sense power a physical sublime eye would not be an object-possessor because it would be physical form. It would be physical form because you assert that it is an eye sense power.

If you say that whatever is physical form is not necessarily *not* an object-possessor, it absurdly follows that whatever is a functioning thing (i.e. whatever is impermanent) is necessarily an object-possessor. The reason for this absurd consequence is that functioning thing (impermanent phenomenon) is categorized into three:

- (1) physical form,
- (2) consciousness, and
- (3) non-associated compositional factor (i.e. an impermanent phenomenon that is neither physical form nor consciousness. For instance, persons or karmic imprints are non-associated compositional factors.)

Thus, if you assert that a physical form such as an eye sense power is an object-possessor, there is no reason for asserting that other physical forms, karmic imprints, etc. are not also object-possessors.

- Regarding the assertion that eye sense powers do not see objects, someone says: "Eyes perceive visual forms because that is renown in the world."  
(Please note that in the context of Buddhist philosophy, eyes do not refer to the actual coarse eye organs but to eye sense powers, i.e. the subtle internal physical form that enables an eye consciousness to perceive shape and colour. Therefore, eye and eye sense power are asserted to be equivalent.)

Our reply to this is: If eyes were to perceive visual forms because it is renown in the world that they do so, it would follow that the colour of soil is soil because that is also renown in the world.

If one were to accept that the colour of soil is soil, it would follow that the colour of soil is a tangible object (and not a visual object). There is a pervasion because whatever is soil is necessarily a tangible object. Whatever is soil is necessarily a tangible object because whatever is fire is necessarily a tangible object.

Whatever is fire is necessarily a tangible object (and thus an object of a body consciousness), because whatever is fire is that which is hot and burning (and the characteristics of being hot and burning can only be perceived by a body consciousness and not by an eye consciousness)

Dharmakirti says in his **Commentary on Valid Cognition (Pramanavartika)**:

*It is like: "For instance, because it does not burn,  
It is not fire."*

- Regarding the assertion that physical sublime eyes are not eye sense powers, someone holds: "Physical sublime eyes are physical eye sense powers because *celestial* sublime eyes are physical eye sense powers. Celestial sublime eyes are physical eye sense powers because celestial eyes are physical eye sense powers. Celestial eyes are physical sense powers because Gyaltshab je says in his **Ornament of the Essence**:

*The celestial eye... is a clear physical form that pertains to the level of meditative equipoise which arises from meditating on perceiving all coarse and subtle forms that are remote and not remote. The clairvoyance [of a celestial eye] is a mental consciousness that is concomitant with the two phenomena [mental stabilization and wisdom] and arises from its empowering condition [the celestial eye]."*

The reply of our own system is that this quotation does not prove that celestial eyes are eye sense powers because this quotation requires interpretation.

- Regarding the two, celestial eyes and celestial *sublime eyes*, someone says: "There is no fault because celestial eyes and celestial *sublime eyes* are not equivalent."

This is not correct because [when presenting the five sublime eyes] the Buddha says:

*Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas' celestial eyes...*

Furthermore, when Arya Vimuktisena in his **Illumination of [the Perfection of Wisdom Sutra in] Twenty Thousand [Verses]** explains the difference between a celestial eye and a clairvoyance of a celestial eye, his viewpoint is that a celestial eye refers to a celestial *sublime eye*.

- Someone says: "Eyes perceive visual form because they look at visual form. They look at visual form because Bhavavevika says in his **Lamp for [Nagarjuna's] Wisdom, Commentary on the 'Treatise of the Middle Way' (Prajnapradipamulamadhyamika)**:

*The subject, eyes, they ultimately do not look at visual form, because they are sense powers. For example, like nose sense powers.*

Adding the word 'ultimately' to the syllogism implies that conventionally eyes look at visual form whereas ultimately they do not.

Our own reply is that there is no fault because even though Bhavavevika cites the above syllogism, what he actually means is the following: *The subject, eye consciousnesses, they ultimately do not look at visual form because they are sense consciousnesses. For example, like eye sense consciousnesses.*

